

Our Place at His Place

About You

September 13, 2020

Welcome to where we're learning what it's all about!



We usually begin with a question; so, **what's it all about?** Lots of opinions on *that*. But, you know what I know for sure? **It's not about you. And it's not about me.**



For by *Him* all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. – Colossians 1:16 NIV



So **what's it all about? Him.** The end. Amen. Sermon's done. Except ... why do I make it about me? Why do you make it about you? **Why do we make it about everything except Him?** Man's search for a sense of meaning and purpose continues to puzzle so many. Know why? We begin at the wrong end: ourselves. So, here's the first big truth to wrap our mind and heart around: **focusing on me prevents me from finding my meaning.** Know why? 'Cause it's not about me! Or *you*. I thought we established that.



If we're *created* beings, then it only stands to reason, that we can only grasp our reason for being, by seeking our *Creator's* reason for creating us. That should be our overriding desire. Know why? Because, being **successful** and being **fulfilled** are two very different things. **Success comes from doing what others admire or desire**, and therefore want to acquire. **Fulfillment comes from fulfilling your reason for being.**



Just as astronomy made *no* sense until we realized that the planets revolve around the *sun*, life makes no sense till we discover that everything revolves around *Him*. **He must be the center of our orbit.**



It's only through Christ that *anyone* can even *hope* to discover their true **origin**; and thereby, their true **identity**; and thereby, their true **significance**; and thereby, their **meaning** (i.e. their reason for being); and thereby, finally, their **purpose** and **destiny**.



The search for some sense of meaning and purpose is hopeless without a Creator. It's illogical. **Without a Creator, there's no purpose to find.** And that's why a self-centered life, wherein everything is seen as revolving around me, can *only* and always result in **disorder, confusion, emptiness, and despair.** And *that's* why **the key is to let Him use me for His purpose** – rather than *me* vainly, religiously, and selfishly, using *Him* for my *own*.

I gotta face the obvious: **I was made for God; God wasn't made for me**. The *actual, genuine* God, I mean. Obviously all the little “g” gods have been made *by us, for us*, and in whatever image *we* desire. And anyone who worships these dead works turns out just like ‘em! But ...

Your *name*, O LORD, endures forever, Your *fame*, O LORD, throughout all generations. ... The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They *have* mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they *have*, but they do not see; they *have* ears, but they do not hear; nor is there *any* breath in their mouths. **[And, guess what]** Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them. – Psalm 135:13-18 NKJ

His images are a fraud; they have no breath in them. They are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. **[But]** He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these, for He is the Maker of *all* things, – Jeremiah 10:14-16 NIV



Were you a mistake? You know, *unplanned*? If not, you likely know someone who was. My mom's mom used to say (regarding the discrepancy between her wedding anniversary and her oldest child's birthday), “First kid only takes six or seven months – but after that it's the usual nine.” If you *were* unplanned, chances are you were treated as a **happy accident**, a **wonderful surprise**, or “the **best mistake we ever made**”. All nice ways of calling you *illegitimate*.



Some of you bear the scars of being *made* to feel like a mistake. Even those who were *planned* can feel like that. But, **that's what you get if you forget about your Creator**. Because *He* wasn't surprised. So your *biologicals* didn't plan; well *He* sure did! **He wasn't caught off guard**. Way before you were conceived (accidentally, intentionally, or howeverly) by your *earthly folks*, you were conceived in the **mind** and **heart** and **will** of your *Heavenly Father*.

For *You* created my *inmost* being; You knit me together *in* my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... Your eyes *saw* my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before *one* of them came to be. How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God! – Psalm 139:13-17 NIV

He not only knows you, **He knew you!** God had a plan for *you* way before there *was* a “you”, or was a “me”. But this means **there's no such thing as illegitimate children**, only illegitimate *parents*. And *that's* only because of the way they choose to react to the reality of the situation.

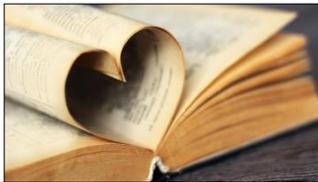
Do you think God creates anything without a reason? So, do you know His chief reason for creating *you*? **To express His love**. He didn't *need* to make you. He wasn't *lonely*. He doesn't need someone to do the chores. **He desired to make you in order to love you!** Know why?

... because God *is* love. **[And]** This is how God *showed* His love among us: He sent *His* one and only Son into the world that *we* might *live* through *Him*. *This* is love: not that *we* loved *God*, but that *He* loved *us* and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. – 1 John 4:7-10 NIV

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... chose *us* in Him before the foundation of the *world*, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He *predestined* us for *adoption* through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, – Ephesians 1:3-5 ESV

So: **your origin was in the Father's heart and mind**; and therefore, **your true identity is a child of God**; and thereby, **your significance was set by Jesus' death**; and therefore, **your reason** for being (i.e. your meaning) **is eternal life through Christ**; and therefore, **your destiny is to fulfill the purpose of His will** – which is, after all, **to love on you**, forever, in His presence.

You're not only *not* a mistake, mishap, or misfortune, but it's a *critical* mistake to even entertain the idea that you could ever possibly be! But, to begin to see yourself through the *lens* of His love, **you gotta be grounded in His love** – which we learn through His Word. And *that's* where the journey to find, not only a *sense* of purpose and meaning, but the very thing *itself*, begins and ends, as we gather it and store it up in our heart as the treasure that it truly is.



It's gotta be the center of my universe. My *driving* force. Because, **if God's love doesn't drive us, something else will**. Lust. Greed. Pride. Ambition. Jealousy. Pressure. Deadlines. Painful memories. A chip on your shoulder. Take your pick. So **what's the driving force in your life?**



The most common I think has to be guilt. The ol' skeleton in the closet. So many people spend so much of their life pointlessly running from regret and shame while *hiding* 'em both *in* their heart! **Guilt-driven folks are controlled by memories**, which allows their past to control their present, and therefore, their *future*. But ...

Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are *covered*. ... When I kept *silent*, my *bones* wasted away ... Then I *acknowledged* my sin to You and did not *cover* up my iniquity. ... And You forgave the *guilt* of my sin. ... Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in Him. – Psalm 32:1-5, 10 NIV

There's no question that **we are products of our past**; but *hey*, **we don't have to be prisoners!** Our Heavenly Father is a conscience-clearing phenomenon! That's His *specialty*. I mean ...

If the blood of bulls and goats ... sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much *more* shall the blood of *Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from *dead* works to serve the *living* God? – Hebrews 9:13-14 NKJ



And if guilt is *first* on the hit list, a close second's gotta be anger. When you're overcome with anger, **do you clam up and internalize?** Or **do you blow up and externalize?** I clam up and clam up and clam up and *blow* up! It resets itself. Ever said: "I'll *never* forgive them for what they did!" That's about as smart as drinking poison so *they'll* die. Which is maybe why ...

Resentment kills a fool ... – Job 5:2 NIV

That *doesn't* mean that resentment *won't* kill you if you're *smart*. It means, no matter how smart you *think* you are – or *actually* are – you'll be a fool to hold onto a grudge, because **resentment is *only* deadly to the poor sap resenting!**

Another all-too-common driving force is fear.



So many people are hobbled and hindered by their self-imposed prison of fear. It's time to break out. Escape. When we focus on the reality (that the very reason God created you was to express His love to you), the driving force of fear is steadily driven out and forced to release you (as surely as light drives out darkness). Because, our Father *is* love, and *is* perfect, and ...

Perfect love drives out fear, – 1 John 4:18 NIV

And until then, it'll keep *you* from becoming the “*you*” *you* were truly *designed* to be.



Another deadly driving force we're all familiar with is approval. Approval-driven people are controlled by the winds of opinions of others; and their quality of life is like a performing seal. But no matter what the voice inside your head has said, ***you're not a mistake and you've nothing to prove.*** Stop preforming. You're *not* a seal. *Although*, I hope you know, you have *been* sealed.

It is God who ... anointed us, set His *seal* of *ownership* on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. – 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NIV

If we don't live in, and live out, our *Father's* love, ***we'll seek someone else's approval and beg for their love,*** to try and fill the gap; because, ***we were designed to need approval.*** But when we settle for something less than God (with a big “G”), or in addition to God, we end up really resenting that person whose approval we thought we needed. But ...

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. – Matthew 6:24 NIV

Easy choice, because there's only One whose approval is selfless and loving and satisfying. And if we're not seeking *that*, ***we'll seek it from some other, much lesser, disappointing source.***

And one last, though very common, driving force that I should mention is materialism.



When the desire to acquire is the central goal of life, we live under ***an oppressive misconception that having more will make us more satisfied, more significant, and secure.*** But, everyone over the age of thirty has most likely come to realize that *that's* not true. So why do so many continue to live as if it *were*? This is one of those things that Jesus just couldn't have made more clear.

I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. ... the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. ... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. – Luke 12:22-34 NIV

It's a destructive mistake to **confuse self-worth with net worth**, because deep down everyone knows that **our value isn't determined by our valuables**. True satisfaction, significance, and security can only be found in that which can never be taken away.



You were created to **be loved**, and to **know you're loved**, and to **be driven by His love**. But, that has to begin with *Him*. **The created doesn't dictate to its Creator**. That's silly. It's also the premise of the Terminator franchise. **If we don't turn to our Father, we'll inevitably turn on our Father**.

Know why? Because **He wasn't designed to live up to our assumptions**. In fact, our Dad wasn't designed at *all*. Because, He's *before* all.

And He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything, because He himself gives all men life and breath and everything else ... and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. 'For in *Him* we live and move and have *our* being. – Acts 17:25-28 NIV

You're in *Him*. But, is He in *you*? **Does every part of your life orbit His love?** If you deeply believe that you've come to exist by His will and design it better. If not, **which parts don't?**

Everything's driven by something. **What would your friends say are your driving forces?** Well, what are you gonna do about it? After all, **it's not about you – but you know, it is because of you.**